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A. LANG

XXII Ballades in Blue China



Tout

Soull.

par

LONDON

C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

MDCCLXXX

Alice Fadelig



A BALLADE OF XXII BALLADES.

*Friend, when you bear a care-dulled eye,
And brow perplexed with things of weight,
And fain would bid some charm untie
The bonds that hold you all too strait,
Behold a solace to your fate,
Wrapped in this cover's china blue ;
These ballades fresh and delicate,
This dainty troop of twenty-two !*

*The mind, unwearied, longs to fly
And commune with the wise and great ;
But that same ether, rare and high,
Which glorifies its worthy mate,
To breath forspent is disparate :
Laughing and light and airy-new
These come to tickle the dull pate,
This dainty troop of twenty-two.*

A BALLADE.

*Most welcome then, when you and I,
Forestalling days for mirth too late,
To quips and cranks and fantasy
Some choice half-hour dedicate,
They weave their dance with measured rate
Of rhymes enlinked in order due,
Till frowns relax and cares abate,
This dainty troop of twenty-two.*

ENVOY.

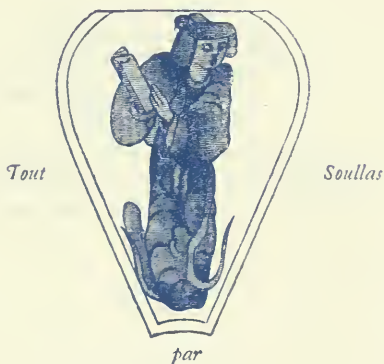
*Princes, of toys that please your state
Quainter are surely none to view
Than these which pass with tripping gait,
This dainty troop of twenty-two.*

F. P.

XXII BALLADES IN
BLUE CHINA

A. LANG

XXII Ballades in Blue China



LONDON

C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE

MDCCCLXXX

ISAAC FOOT
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*" Rondeaux, BALLADES,
Chansons, dizains, propos menus,
Compte moy qu'ilz sont devenuz :
Se faict il plus rien de nouveau ? "*

CLEMENT MAROT, *Dialogue de deux
Amoureux.*

" I love a ballad but even too well; if it be doleful
matter, merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing
indeed, and sung lamentably."

A Winter's Tale, Act iv. sc. 3.

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

TO
AUSTIN DOBSON.

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BALLADE TO THEOCRITUS, IN
WINTER.

ἔσορξεν τὰν Σικελὰν ἐς ἄλα.

Id. viii. 56.

Ah ! leave the smoke, the wealth; the roar
Of London, and the bustling street,
For still, by the Sicilian shore,
The murmur of the Muse is sweet.
Still, still, the suns of summer greet
The mountain-grave of Helikê,
And shepherds still their songs repeat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

What though they worship Pan no more,
That guarded once the shepherd's seat,
They chatter of their rustic lore,
They watch the wind among the wheat:

Cicalas chirp, the young lambs bleat,
Where whispers pine to cypress tree ;
They count the waves that idly beat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

Theocritus ! thou canst restore
The pleasant years, and over-fleet ;
With thee we live as men of yore,
We rest where running waters meet :
And then we turn unwilling feet
And seek the world—so must it be—
We may not linger in the heat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea !

ENVOY.

Master,—when rain, and snow, and sleet
And northern winds are wild, to thee
We come, we rest in thy retreat,
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea !

BALLADE OF CLEOPATRA'S
NEEDLE.

Ye giant shades of RA and TUM,
Ye ghosts of gods Egyptian,
If murmurs of our planet come
To exiles in the precincts wan
Where, fetish or Olympian,
To help or harm no more ye list,
Look down, if look ye may, and scan
This monument in London mist!

Behold, the hieroglyphs are dumb
That once were read of him that ran
When seistron, cymbal, trump, and drum
Wild music of the Bull began ;
When through the chanting priestly clan
Walk'd Ramses, and the high sun kiss'd
This stone, with blessing scored and ban—
This monument in London mist.

The stone endures though gods be numb ;
Though human effort, plot, and plan
Be sifted, drifted, like the sum
Of sands in wastes Arabian.
What king may deem him more than man,
What priest says Faith can Time resist
While *this* endures to mark their span—
This monument in London mist ?

ENVOY.

Prince, the stone's shade on your divan
Falls ; it is longer than ye wist :
It preaches, as Time's gnomon can,
This monument in London mist !

BALLADE OF ROULETTE.

TO R. R.

This life—one was thinking to-day,
In the midst of a medley of fancies—
Is a game, and the board where we play
Green earth with her poppies and pansies.
Let *manque* be faded romances,
Be *passe* remorse and regret ;
Hearts dance with the wheel as it dances—
The wheel of Dame Fortune's roulette.

The lover will stake as he may
His heart on his Peggies and Nancies ;
The girl has her beauty to lay ;
The saint has his prayers and his trances ;
The poet bets endless expanses
In Dreamland ; the scamp has his debt :
How they gaze at the wheel as it glances—
The wheel of Dame Fortune's roulette !

The Kaiser will stake his array
Of sabres, of Krupps, and of lances ;
An Englishman punts with his pay,
And glory the *jeton* of France is ;
Your artists, or Whistlers or Vances,
Have voices or colours to bet ;
Will you moan that its motion askance is—
The wheel of Dame Fortune's roulette ?

ENVOY.

The prize that the pleasure enhances ?
The prize is—at last to forget
The changes, the chops, and the chances—
The wheel of Dame Fortune's roulette.

BALLADE OF SLEEP.

The hours are passing slow,
I hear their weary tread
Clang from the tower, and go
Back to their kinsfolk dead.
Sleep ! death's twin brother dread !
Why dost thou scorn me so ?
The wind's voice overhead
Long wakeful here I know,
And music from the steep
Where waters fall and flow.
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ?

All sounds that might bestow
Rest on the fever'd bed,
All slumb'rous sounds and low
Are mingled here and wed,
And bring no drowsihed.

Shy dreams flit to and fro
With shadowy hair dispread ;
With wistful eyes that glow,
And silent robes that sweep.
Thou wilt not hear me ; no ?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ?

What cause hast thou to show
Of sacrifice unsped ?
Of all thy slaves below
I most have labourèd
With service sung and said ;
Have cull'd such buds as blow,
Soft poppies white and red,
Where thy still gardens grow,
And Lethe's waters weep.
Why, then, art thou my foe ?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ?

ENVOY.

Prince, ere the dark be shred
By golden shafts, ere low

And long the shadows creep:
Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft-footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep !

BALLADE OF THE MIDNIGHT
FOREST.

AFTER THÉODORE DE BANVILLE.

Still sing the mocking fairies, as of old,
Beneath the shade of thorn and holly-tree ;
The west wind breathes upon them, pure and
cold,
And wolves still dread Diana roaming free
In secret woodland with her company.
'Tis thought the peasants' hovels know her
rite
When now the wolds are bathed in silver
light,
And first the moonrise breaks the dusky grey,
Then down the dells, with blown soft hair and
bright,
And through the dim wood Dian threads her
way.

With water-weeds twined in their locks of
gold

The strange cold forest-fairies dance in glee,
Sylphs over-timorous and over-bold
Haunt the dark hollows where the dwarf may be,
The wild red dwarf, the nixies' enemy ;
Then 'mid their mirth, and laughter, and
affright,

The sudden Goddess enters, tall and white,
With one long sigh for summers pass'd away ;
The swift feet tear the ivy nets outright
And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

She gleans her silvan trophies ; down the wold
She hears the sobbing of the stags that flee
Mixed with the music of the hunting roll'd,
But her delight is all in archery,
And naught of ruth and pity wotteth she
More than her hounds that follow on the flight ;
The goddess draws a golden bow of might
And thick she rains the gentle shafts that slay.
She tosses loose her locks upon the night,
And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

ENVOY.

Prince, let us leave the din, the dust, the spite,
The gloom and glare of towns, the plague, the
 blight :

Amid the forest leaves and fountain spray
There is the mystic home of our delight,
And through the dim wood Dian threads her
 way.

BALLADE OF THE TWEED.

(LOWLAND SCOTCH.)

TO T. W. LANG.

The ferox rins in rough Loch Awe,
A weary cry frae ony toun ;
The Spey, that louns o'er linn and fa',
They praise a' ither streams aboon ;
They boast their braes o' bonny Doon :
Gie *me* to hear the ringing reel,
Where shilfas sing, and cushats croon
By fair Tweed-side, at Ashiesteel !

There's Ettrick, Meggat, Ail, and a',
Where trout swim thick in May and June ;
Ye'll see them take in showers o' snaw
Some blinking, cauldrie April noon :
Rax ower the palmer and march-broun,
And syne we'll show a bonny creel,
In spring or simmer, late or soon,
By fair Tweed-side, at Ashiesteel !

There's mony a water, great or sma',
Gaes singing in his siller tune,
Through glen and heugh, and hope and shaw,
Beneath the sun-licht or the moon :
But set us in our fishing-shoon
Between the Caddon-burn and Peel,
And syne we'll cross the heather broun
By fair Tweed-side at Ashiesteel !

ENVOY.

Deil take the dirty, trading loon
Wad gar the water ca' his wheel,
And drift his dyes and poisons doun
By fair Tweed-side at Ashiesteel !

BALLADE OF THE BOOK-HUNTER.

In torrid heats of late July,
In March, beneath the bitter *bise*,
He book-hunts while the loungers fly,—
He book-hunts, though December freeze ;
In breeches baggy at the knees,
And heedless of the public jeers,
For these, for these, he hoards his fees,—
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.

No dismal stall escapes his eye,
He turns o'er tomes of low degrees,
There soiled romanticists may lie,
Or Restoration comedies ;
Each tract that flutters in the breeze
For him is charged with hopes and fears,
In mouldy novels fancy sees
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.

With restless eyes that peer and spy,
Sad eyes that heed not skies nor trees,
In dismal nooks he loves to pry,
Whose motto evermore is *Spes* !
But ah ! the fabled treasure flees ;
Grown rarer with the fleeting years,
In rich men's shelves they take their ease,—
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs !

ENVOY.

Prince, all the things that tease and please,—
Fame, hope, wealth, kisses, cheers, and tears,
What are they but such toys as these—
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs ?

BALLADE OF THE VOYAGE TO
CYTHERA.

AFTER THÉODORE DE BANVILLE.

I know Cythera long is desolate ;
I know the winds have stripp'd the gardens
 green.
Alas, my friends ! beneath the fierce sun's
 weight
A barren reef lies where Love's flowers have
 been,
Nor ever lover on that coast is seen !
So be it, but we seek a fabled shore,
To lull our vague desires with mystic lore,
To wander where Love's labyrinths beguile ;
There let us land, there dream for evermore :
“ It may be we shall touch the happy isle.”

The sea may be our sepulchre. If Fate,
If tempests wreak their wrath on us, serene
We watch the bolt of heaven, and scorn the hate
Of angry gods that smite us in their spleen.
Perchance the jealous mists are but the screen
That veils the fairy coast we would explore.
Come, though the sea be vex'd, and breakers
 roar,
Come, for the air of this old world is vile,
Haste we, and toil, and faint not at the oar ;
“It may be we shall touch the happy isle.”

Grey serpents trail in temples desecrate
Where Cypris smiled, the golden maid, the queen,
And ruined is the palace of our state ;
But happy Loves flit round the mast, and keen
The shrill wind sings the silken cords between.
Heroes are we, with wearied hearts and sore,
Whose flower is faded and whose locks are hoar,
Yet haste, light skiffs, where myrtle thickets
 smile ;
Love's panthers sleep 'mid roses, as of yore :
“It may be we shall touch the happy isle !”

ENVOY.

Sad eyes ! the blue sea laughs, as heretofore.

Ah, singing birds your happy music pour !

Ah, poets, leave the sordid earth awhile ;

Flit to these ancient gods we still adore :

“ It may be we shall touch the happy isle ! ”

BALLADE OF THE SUMMER TERM.

*(Being a Petition, in the form of a Ballade,
praying the University Commissioners
to spare the Summer Term.)*

When Lent and Responsions are ended,
When May with fritillaries waits,
When the flower of the chestnut is splendid,
When drags are at all of the gates
(Those drags the philosopher "slates"
With a scorn that is truly sublime),*
Life wins from the grasp of the Fates
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

When wickets are bowl'd and defended,
When Isis is glad with "the Eights,"
When music and sunset are blended,
When Youth and the summer are mates,

* Cf. "Suggestions for Academic Reorganization."

When Freshmen are heedless of "Greats,"
And when note-books are cover'd with rhyme,
Ah, these are the hours that one rates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time !

When the brow of the Dean is unbended
At luncheons and mild tête-à-têtes,
When the Tutor's in love, nor offended
By blunders in tenses or dates ;
When bouquets are purchased of Bates,
When the bells in their melody chime,
When unheeded the Lecturer prates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time !

ENVOY.

Reformers of Schools and of States,
Is mirth so tremendous a crime ?
Ah ! spare what grim pedantry hates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time !

BALLADE OF THE MUSE.

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel.

The man whom once, Melpomene,
Thou look'st on with benignant sight,
Shall never at the Isthmus be
A boxer eminent in fight,
Nor fares he foremost in the flight
Of Grecian cars to victory,
Nor goes with Delian laurels dight,
The man thou lov'st, Melpomene !

Not him the Capitol shall see,
As who hath crush'd the threats and might
Of monarchs, march triumphantly;
But Fame shall crown him, in his right
Of all the Roman lyre that smite
The first ; so woods of Tivoli
Proclaim him, so her waters bright,
The man thou lov'st, Melpomene !

The sons of queenly Rome count *me*,
Me too, with them whose chants delight,—
The poets' kindly company ;
Now broken is the tooth of spite,
But thou, that temperest aright
The golden lyre, all, all to thee
He owes—life, fame, and fortune's height—
The man thou lov'st, Melpomene !

ENVOY.

Queen, that to mute lips could'st unite
The wild swan's dying melody !
Thy gifts, ah ! how shall he requite—
The man thou lov'st, Melpomene ?

BALLADE AGAINST THE JESUITS.

AFTER LA FONTAINE.

Rome does right well to censure all the vain
Talk of Jansenius, and of them who preach
That earthly joys are damnable ! 'Tis plain
We need not charge at Heaven as at a breach ;
No, amble on ! We'll gain it, one and all ;
The narrow path's a dream fantastical,
And Arnauld's quite superfluously driven
Mirth from the world ! We'll scale the
 heavenly wall,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven !

He does not hold a man may well be slain
Who vexes with unseasonable speech,
You *may* do murder for five ducats gain,
Not for a pin, a ribbon, or a peach ;
He ventures (most consistently) to teach

That there are certain cases that befall
When perjury need no good man appal,
And life of love (he says) may keep a leaven.
Sure, hearing this, a grateful world will bawl,
“Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven !”

“For God’s sake read me somewhat in the strain
Of his most cheering volumes, I beseech !”
Why should I name them all ? a mighty train—
So many, none may know the name of each.
Make these your compass to the heavenly beach,
These only in your library instal :
Burn Pascal and his fellows, great and small,
Dolts that in vain with Escobar have striven ;
I tell you, and the common voice doth call,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven !

ENVOY.

Satan, that pride did hurry to thy fall,
Thou porter of the grim infernal hall—
Thou keeper of the courts of souls unshriven !
To shun thy shafts, to ’scape thy hellish thrall,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven !

BALLADE OF DEAD CITIES.

TO E. W. GOSSE.

The dust of Carthage and the dust
Of Babel on the desert wold,
The loves of Corinth, and the lust,
Orchomenos increased with gold ;
The town of Jason, over-bold,
And Cherson, smitten in her prime—
What are they but a dream half-told?
Where are the cities of old time ?

In towns that were a kingdom's trust,
In dim Atlantic forests' fold,
The marble wasteth to a crust,
The granite crumbles into mould ;
O'er these—left nameless from of old—
As over Shinar's brick and slime,
One vast forgetfulness is roll'd—
Where are the cities of old time ?

The lapse of ages, and the rust,
The fire, the frost, the waters cold,
Efface the evil and the just ;
From Thebes, that Eriphyle sold,
To drown'd Caer-Is, whose sweet bells toll'd
Beneath the wave a dreamy chime
That echo'd from the mountain-hold,—
“Where are the cities of old time ?”

ENVOY.

Prince, all thy towns and cities must
Decay as these, till all their crime,
And mirth, and wealth, and toil are thrust
Where are the cities of old time.

BALLADE OF THE ROYAL GAME
OF GOLF.

(EAST FIFESHIRE.)

There are laddies will drive ye a ba'
To the burn frae the farthermost tee,
But ye mauna think driving is a',
Ye may heel her, and send her ajee,
Ye may land in the sand or the sea ;
And ye're dune, sir, ye're no worth a preen,
Tak' the word that an auld man 'll gie,
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green !

The auld folk are crouse, and they craw
That their putting is pawky and slee ;
In a bunker they're nae gude ava',
But to girn, and to gar the sand flee.
And a lassie can putt—ony she,—
Be she Maggy, or Bessie, or Jean,

But a cleek-shot's the billy for me,
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green !

I hae play'd in the frost and the thaw,
I hae play'd since the year thirty-three,
I hae play'd in the rain and the snaw,
And I trust I may play till I dee ;
And I tell ye the truth and nae lee,
For I speak o' the thing I hae seen—
Tam Morris, I ken, will agree—
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green !

ENVOY.

Prince, faith you're improving a wee,
And, Lord, man, they tell me you're keen ;
Tak' the best o' advice that can be,
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green !

DOUBLE BALLADE OF PRIMITIVE
MAN.

TO J. A. FARRER.

He lived in a cave by the seas,
He lived upon oysters and foes,
But his list of forbidden degrees,
An extensive morality shows ;
Geological evidence goes
To prove he had never a pan,
But he shaved with a shell when he chose,—
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man.

He worshipp'd the rain and the breeze,
He worshipp'd the river that flows,
And the Dawn, and the Moon, and the trees,
And bogies, and serpents, and crows ;
He buried his dead with their toes
Tucked-up, an original plan,
Till their knees came right under their nose,—
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man.

His communal wives, at his ease,
He would curb with occasional blows ;
Or his State had a queen, like the bees
(As another philosopher trows) :
When he spoke, it was never in prose,
But he sang in a strain that would scan,
For (to doubt it, perchance, were morose)
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man !

On the coasts that incessantly freeze,
With his stones, and his bones, and his bows ;
On luxuriant tropical leas,
Where the summer eternally glows,
He is found, and his habits disclose
(Let theology say what she can)
That he lived in the long, long agos,
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man !

From a status like that of the Crees,
Our society's fabric arose,—
Develop'd, evolved, if you please,
But deluded chronologists chose,

In a fancied accordance with Mos
es, 4000 B.C. for the span
When he rushed on the world and its woes,—
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man !

But the mild anthropologist,—*he's*
Not *recent* inclined to suppose
Flints Palæolithic like these,
Quaternary bones such as those !
In Rhinoceros, Mammoth and Co.'s,
First epoch, the Human began,
Theologians all to expose,—
'Tis the *mission* of Primitive Man.

ENVOY.

MAX, proudly your Aryans pose,
But their rigs they undoubtedly ran,
For, as every Darwinian knows,
'Twas the manner of Primitive Man !

BALLADE OF AUTUMN.

We built a castle in the air,
In summer weather, you and I,
The wind and sun were in your hair,—
Gold hair against a sapphire sky :
When Autumn came, with leaves that fly
Before the storm, across the plain,
You fled from me, with scarce a sigh—
My Love returns no more again !

The windy lights of Autumn flare :
I watch the moonlit sails go by ;
I marvel how men toil and fare,
The weary business that they ply !
Their voyaging is vanity,
And fairy gold is all their gain,
And all the winds of winter cry,
“ My Love returns no more again ! ”

Here, in my castle of Despair,
I sit alone with memory ;
The wind-fed wolf has left his lair,
To keep the outcast company.
The brooding owl he hoots hard by,
The hare shall kindle on thy hearth-stane,
The Rhymer's soothest prophecy,—*
My Love returns no more again !

ENVOY.

Lady, my home until I die
Is here, where youth and hope were slain ;
They flit, the ghosts of our July,
My Love returns no more again !

* Thomas of Ercildoune.

BALLADE OF TRUE WISDOM.

While others are asking for beauty or fame,
Or praying to know that for which they should
prayer,

Or courting Queen Venus, that affable dame,
Or chasing the Muses the weary and grey,
The sage has found out a more excellent way—
To Pan and to Pallas his incense he showers,
And his humble petition puts up day by day,
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

Inventors may bow to the God that is lame,
And crave from the fire on his stithy a ray ;
Philosophers kneel to the God without name,
Like the people of Athens, agnostics are they ;
The hunter a fawn to Diana will slay,
The maiden wild roses will wreath for the
Hours ;

But the wise man will ask, ere libation he pay,
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

Oh ! grant me a life without pleasure or blame
(As mortals count pleasure who rush through
their day

With a speed to which that of the tempest is
tame) !

O grant me a house by the beach of a bay,
Where the waves can be surly in winter, and
play

With the sea-weed in summer, ye bountiful
powers !

And I'd leave all the hurry, the noise, and the
fray,

For a house full of books, and a garden of
flowers.

ENVOY.

Gods, grant or withhold it ; your "yea" and
your "nay "

Are immutable, heedless of outcry of ours :
But life *is* worth living, and here we would stay
For a house full of books, and a garden of
flowers.

BALLADE OF WORLDLY WEALTH.

(OLD FRENCH.)

Money taketh town and wall,
Fort and ramp without a blow ;
Money moves the merchants all,
While the tides shall ebb and flow ;
Money maketh Evil show
Like the Good, and Truth like lies :
These alone can ne'er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

Money maketh festival,
Wine she buys, and beds can strow ;
Round the necks of captains tall,
Money wins them chains to throw,
Marches soldiers to and fro,
Gaineth ladies with sweet eyes :
These alone can ne'er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

Money wins the priest his stall ;
Money mitres buys, I trow,
Red hats for the Cardinal,
Abbeys for the novice low ;
Money maketh sin as snow,
Place of penitence supplies :
These alone can ne'er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

BALLADE OF LIFE.

“ ‘ Dead and gone,’—a sorry burden of the Ballad of Life.”

Death's Jest Book.

Say, fair maids, maying
In gardens green,
In deep dells straying,
What end hath been
Two Mays between
Of the flowers that shone
And your own sweet queen—
“ They are dead and gone ! ”

Say, grave priests, praying
In dule and teen,
From cells decaying
What have ye seen
Of the proud and mean,
Of Judas and John,
Of the foul and clean?—
“ They are dead and gone ! ”

Say, kings, arraying
Loud wars to win,
Of your manslaying
What gain ye glean?
“ They are fierce and keen,
But they fall anon,
On the sword that lean,—
They are dead and gone ! ”

ENVOY.

Through the mad world's scene,
We are drifting on,
To this tune, I ween,
“ They are dead and gone ! ”

BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA.

There's a joy without canker or cark,
There's a pleasure eternally new,
'Tis to gloat on the glaze and the mark
Of china that's ancient and blue ;
Unchipp'd all the centuries through
It has pass'd, since the chime of it rang,
And they fashion'd it, figure and hue,
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

These dragons (their tails, you remark,
Into bunches of gillyflowers grew),—
When Noah came out of the ark,
Did these lie in wait for his crew ?
They snorted, they snapp'd, and they slew ;
They were mighty of fin and of fang,
And their portraits Celestials drew
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

Here's a pot with a cot in a park,
In a park where the peach-blossoms blew,
Where the lovers eloped in the dark,
Lived, died, and were changed into two
Bright birds that eternally flew
Through the boughs of the may, as they sang ;
'Tis a tale was undoubtedly true
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

ENVOY.

Come, snarl at my ecstasies, do,
Kind critic, your "tongue has a tang"
But—a sage never heeded a shrew
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES.

(AFTER VILLON.)

Nay, tell me now in what strange air
The Roman Flora dwells to-day.
Where Archippiada hides, and where
Beautiful Thais has passed away?
Whence answers Echo, afield, astray,
By mere or stream,—around, below?
Lovelier she than a woman of clay;
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

Where is wise Héloïse, that care
Brought on Abeilard, and dismay?
All for her love he found a snare,
A maimed poor monk in orders grey;
And where's the Queen who willed to slay
Buridan, that in a sack must go
Afloat down Seine,—a perilous way—
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

Where's that White Queen, a lily rare,
With her sweet song, the Siren's lay?
Where's Bertha Broad-foot, Beatrice fair?
Alys and Ermengarde, where are they?
Good Joan, whom English did betray
In Rouen town, and burned her? No,
Maiden and Queen, no man may say;
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

ENVOY.

Prince, all this week thou need'st not pray,
Nor yet this year the thing to know.
One burden answers, ever and aye,
“Nay, but where is the last year's snow?”

VILLON'S BALLADE

OF GOOD COUNSEL, TO HIS FRIENDS OF
EVIL LIFE.

Nay, be you pardonor or cheat,
Or cogger keen, or mumper shy,
You'll burn your fingers at the feat,
And howl like other folks that fry.
All evil folks that love a lie !
And where goes gain that greed amasses,
By wile, and trick, and thievery ?
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses !

Rhyme, rail, dance, play the cymbals sweet,
With game, and shame, and jollity,
Go jigging through the field and street,
With *myst'ry* and *morality* ;
Win gold at *gleek*,—and that will fly,
Where all you gain at *passage* passes,—
And that's ? You know as well as I,
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses !

Nay, forth from all such filth retreat,
Go delve and ditch, in wet or dry,
Turn groom, give horse and mule their meat,
If you've no clerkly skill to ply ;
You'll gain enough, with husbandry,
But—sow hempseed and such wild grasses,
And where goes all you take thereby?—
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses !

ENVOY.

Your clothes, your hose, your broidery,
Your linen that the snow surpasses,
Or ere they're worn, off, off they fly,
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses !

BALLADE OF HIS CHOICE OF A
SEPULCHRE.

Here I'd come when weariest !

Here the breast

Of the Windburg's tufted over

Deep with bracken ; here his crest

Takes the west,

Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Silent here are lark and plover ;

In the cover

Deep below the cushat best

Loves his mate, and croons above her

O'er their nest,

Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Bring me here, Life's tired-out guest,

To the blest

Bed that waits the weary rover,

Here should failure be confessed ;

Ends my quest,

Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover !

ENVOY.

Friend, or stranger kind, or lover,

Ah, fulfil a last behest,

Let me rest

Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover !

DIZAIN.

*As, to the pipe, with rhythmic feet
In windings of some old-world dance,
The smiling couples cross and meet,
Join hands, and then in line advance,
So, to these fair old tunes of France,
Through all their maze of to-and-fro,
The light-heeled numbers laughing go,
Retreat, return, and ere they flee,
One moment pause in panting row,
And seem to say—Vos plaudite !*

A. D.

VERSES AND TRANSLATIONS.

ORONTE.—*Ce ne sont point de ces grands vers pompeux,
Mais de petits vers !*

“Le Misanthrope,” Acte i., Sc. 2.

A PORTRAIT OF 1783.

Your hair and chin are like the hair
And chin Burne-Jones's ladies wear ;
You were unfashionably fair

In '83 ;

And sad you were when girls are gay,
You read a book about *Le vrai*
Mérite de l'homme, alone in May.

What *can* it be,

Le vrai mérite de l'homme? Not gold,
Not titles that are bought and sold,
Not wit that flashes and is cold,

But Virtue merely !

Instructed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau
(And Jean-Jacques, surely, ought to know),
You bade the crowd of foplings go,
You glanced severely,

Dreaming beneath the spreading shade
Of 'that vast hat the Graces made ;' *

So Rouget sang—while yet he played

With courtly rhyme,

And hymned great Doisi's red perruque,

And Nice's eyes, and Zulmé's look,

And dead canaries, ere he shook

The sultry time

With strains like thunder. Loud and low

Methinks I hear the murmur grow,

The tramp of men that come and go

With fire and sword.

They war against the quick and dead,

Their flying feet are dashed with red,

As theirs the vintaging that tread

Before the Lord.

* Vous y verrez, belle Julie,

Que ce chapeau tout maltraité

Fut, dans un instant de folie,

Par les Grâces même inventé.

'À Julie.' *Essais en Prose et en Vers*, par Joseph
Rouget de Lisle ; Paris. An. V. de la République.

O head unfashionably fair,
What end was thine, for all thy care?
We only see thee dreaming there :

 We cannot see
The breaking of thy vision, when
The Rights of Man were lords of men,
When virtue won her own again

 In '93.

THE MOON'S MINION.

(FROM THE PROSE OF C. BAUDELAIRE.)

Thine eyes are like the sea, my dear,
The wand'ring waters, green and grey ;
Thine eyes are wonderful and clear,
And deep, and deadly, even as they ;
The spirit of the changeful sea
Informs thine eyes at night and noon,
She sways the tides, and the heart of thee,
The mystic, sad, capricious Moon !

The Moon came down the shining stair
Of clouds that fleck the summer sky,
She kissed thee, saying, " Child, be fair,
And madden men's hearts, even as I ;
Thou shalt love all things strange and sweet,
That know me and are known of me ;
The lover thou shalt never meet,
The land where thou shalt never be ! "

She held thee in her chill embrace,
 She kissed thee with cold lips divine,
She left her pallor on thy face,
 That mystic ivory face of thine ;
And now I sit beside thy feet,
 And all my heart is far from thee,
Dreaming of her I shall not meet,
 And of the land I shall not see !

IN ITHACA.

“And now am I greatly repenting that ever I left my life with thee, and the immortality thou didst promise me.”—*Letter of Odysseus to Calypso*. Luciani *Vera Historia*.

'Tis thought Odysseus when the strife was o'er
With all the waves and wars, a weary while,
Grew restless in his disenchanted isle,
And still would watch the sunset, from the
shore,
Go down the ways of gold, and evermore
His sad heart followed after, mile on mile,
Back to the Goddess of the magic wile,
Calypso, and the love that was of yore.

Thou too, thy haven gained, must turn thee yet
To look across the sad and stormy space,
Years of a youth as bitter as the sea,
Ah, with a heavy heart, and eyelids wet,
Because, within a fair forsaken place
The life that might have been is lost to thee.

HOMER.

Homer, thy song men liken to the sea
With all the notes of music in its tone,
With tides that wash the dim dominion
Of Hades, and light waves that laugh in glee
Around the isles enchanted ; nay, to me
Thy verse seems as the River of source
unknown
That glasses Egypt's temples overthrown
In his sky-nurtured stream, eternally.

No wiser we than men of heretofore
To find thy sacred fountains guarded fast ;
Enough, thy flood makes green our human
shore,
As Nilus Egypt, rolling down his vast
His fertile flood, that murmurs evermore
Of gods dethroned, and empires in the past.

THE BURIAL OF MOLIERE.

(AFTER J. TRUFFIER.)

Dead—he is dead ! The rouge has left a trace
On that thin cheek where shone, perchance,
a tear,

Even while the people laughed that held
him dear

But yesterday. He died,—and not in grace,
And many a black-robed caitiff starts apace
To slander him whose *Tartuffe* made them
fear,

And gold must win a passage for his bier,
And bribe the crowd that guards his resting-
place.

Ah, Molière, for that last time of all,
Man's hatred broke upon thee, and went by,
And did but make more fair thy funeral.

Though in the dark they hid thee stealthily,
Thy coffin had the cope of night for pall,
For torch, the stars along the windy sky !

BION.

The wail of Moschus on the mountains crying
The Muses heard, and loved it long ago ;
They heard the hollows of the hills replying,
They heard the weeping water's overflow ;
They winged the sacred strain—the song
 undying,

The song that all about the world must go,—
When poets for a poet dead are sighing,
The minstrels for a minstrel friend laid low.

And dirge to dirge that answers, and the
 weeping

For Adonais by the summer sea,
The plaints for Lycidas, and Thyrsis (sleeping
Far from 'the forest ground called Thessaly'),
These hold thy memory, Bion, in their keeping,
And are but echoes of the moan for thee.

SPRING.

(AFTER MELEAGER.)

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And, straying o'er the mountain's brow,
The daffodilies bud again.

The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough,
But fairer than the flowers art thou,
Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown,
That my Love's feet may tread it down,
Like lilies on the lilies set ;
My Love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
And sweeter than the violet !

BEFORE THE SNOW.

(AFTER ALBERT GLATIGNY.)

The winter is upon us, not the snow,
The hills are etched on the horizon bare,
The skies are iron grey, a bitter air,
The meagre cloudlets shudder to and fro.
One yellow leaf the listless wind doth blow,
Like some strange butterfly, unclassed and
rare.

Your footsteps ring in frozen alleys, where
The black trees seem to shiver as you go.

Beyond lie church and steeple, with their old
And rusty vanes that rattle as they veer,
A sharper gust would shake them from their
hold,

Yet up that path, in summer of the year,
And past that melancholy pile we strolled
To pluck wild strawberries, with merry cheer.

VILLANELLE.

TO LUCIA.

Apollo left the golden Muse
And shepherded a mortal's sheep,
Theocritus of Syracuse !

To mock the giant swain that woo's
The sea-nymph in the sunny deep,
Apollo left the golden Muse.

He drove afield his lambs and ewes,
Where Milon and where Battus reap,
Theocritus of Syracuse !

To watch thy tunny-fishers cruise
Below the dim Sicilian steep
Apollo left the golden Muse.

Ye twain did loiter in the dews,
Ye slept the swain's unfever'd sleep,
Theocritus of Syracuse !

That Time might half with *his* confuse

Thy songs,—like his, that laugh and leap,—
Theocritus of Syracuse,
Apollo left the golden Muse !

THE MYSTERY OF QUEEN
PERSEPHONE.

St. Paul and the Devil disputing about the Immortality of Man's Soul, and St. Paul maintaining the same, (from the similitude of the corn-seed sown, which again sprouteth,) the Devil refutes him by his atheistic subtlety, but is put to shame by the evidence of three witnesses, namely, Persephone, Hela, and St. Lucy.

The Scene is Mount Gerizim.

*Intrabunt Sanctus Paulus, et Diabolus, inter
se de immortalitate Animae disputantes.*

SANCTUS PAULUS.

Ye say that when a man is dead
He never more shall lift his head,
As doth the flower perishèd,
Nor break ne sweet ne bitter bread.

I hold you much in scorn !
Lo, if you cast in earth a seed
That seemeth to be dead indeed,
I wot ye shall have corn ;

And all men shall rejoice and reap :
And so it fares with them that sleep,
The narrow house doth them but keep
Until the judgment morn.

DIABOLUS.

There is an end of grief and mirth,
There is an end of all things born,
And if ye sow into the earth
A seed, ye shall have corn ;
But if ye sow its withered root
It shall not bear you any fruit,
It will not sprout and spring again ;
And if ye look to gather grain,
Of men mote ye have scorn.
Man's body buried is the sown
Dead root, whose flower is over-blown.

SANCTUS PAULUS.

Beshrew thee for thy subtleties
That melt the hearts of men with lies,
An evil task hath he that tries
To still thy subtle tongue !

But look ye round and ye shall see
The Dames that Queens of dead men be,
I wot there are no mo than three,
When all is said and sung.

Hic intrabunt et cantabunt tres Reginae.

PERSEPHONE.

I am the Queen Persephone.
The lips of Grecians prayed to me,
Saying, I give men sleep ;
But I would have ye well to know
That with me none do slumber so ;
But there be some that weep,
And juster souls content to dwell
Among the fields of asphodel,
By the Nine Waters deep.

HELA.

I am the Queen of Hela's House,
Great clouds I bind upon my brows ;
Night for a covering.
For them I hold, I will ye wot

They sorrow, but they slumber not,
 They have no lust to sing,
And never comes a merry voice,
Nor doth a soul of them rejoice
 Until their uprising.

SANCTA LUCIA.

I am a Queen of Paradise,
And who shall look on me, I wis,
 His spirit shall find grace.
Whoso dwells with me walks along
In gardens glad with small birds' song,
 A flowered and grassy place,
Therein the souls of blessèd men
Wait each, till comes his love again,
 To look upon her face !

SANCTUS PAULUS.

Thou, Sir Diabolus, art shent,
I wot that well ye might repent,
But till Midsummer fall in Lent,
 Ye will not cease to sin.

Get thee to dungeon underground
And sit beside thy man, Mahound.
I wot I would ye twain were bound
For evermore therein.

Fugiat Diabolus ad locum suum.

IDEAL.

Suggested by a female head in wax, of unknown date, but supposed to be either of the best Greek age, or a work of Raphael or Leonardo. It is now in the Lille Museum.

Ah, mystic child of Beauty, nameless maid,
Dateless and fatherless, how long ago,
A Greek, with some rare sadness overweighed,
Shaped thee, perchance, and quite forgot his
 woe !

Or Raphael thy sweetness did bestow,
While magical his fingers o'er thee strayed,
Or that great pupil of Verrocchio
Redeemed thy still perfection from the shade
That hides all fair things lost, and things
 unborn,
Where one has fled from me, that wore thy
 grace,

80 *VERSES AND TRANSLATIONS.*

And that grave tenderness of thine awhile ;
Nay, still in dreams I see her, but her face
Is pale, is wasted with a touch of scorn,
And only on thy lips I find her smile.

T H E E N D .

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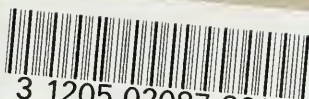




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